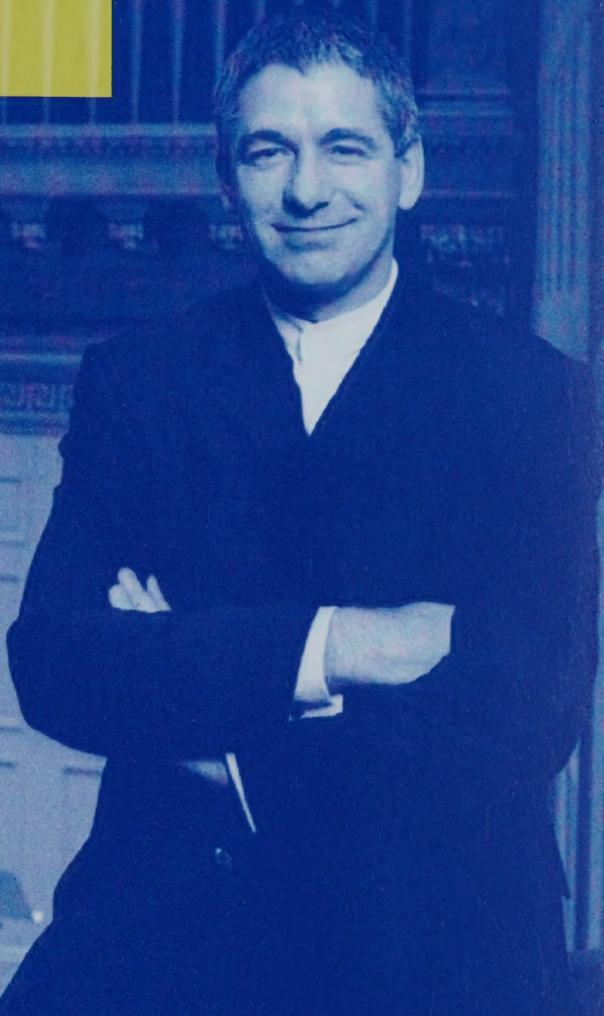


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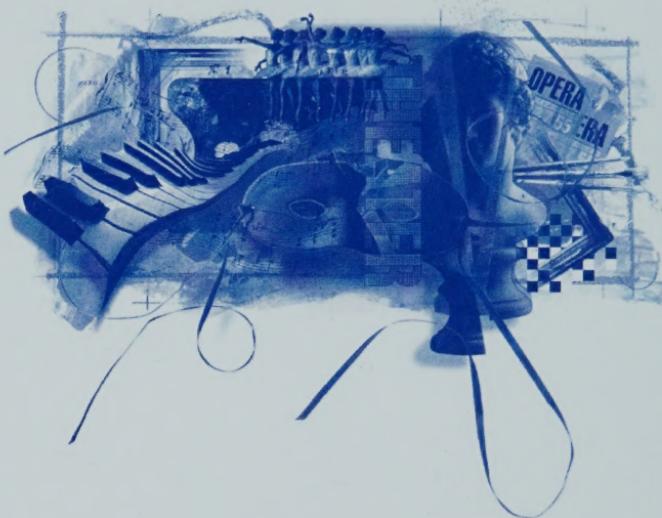
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Jazz/Classical: Improvisations

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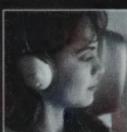
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Rich Warren, Chicago Tribune, 6/190.

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2001-2002 SEASON

Friday, January 18 at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 20 at 3:00 p.m.

Symphony Hall

Grant Llewellyn, *conductor*

Symphony No. 59 in A Major, "Fire"

Presto

Andante o più tosto Allegretto

Menuetto

Allegro assai

Franz Joseph Haydn

[1732-1809]

Church Sonata in C Major, K. 336

Wolfgang Amadé Mozart

[1756-1791]

Wayne Marshall, *organ*

Selection to be announced

Organ Improvisation

Wayne Marshall

-INTERMISSION-

3 Preludes

George Gershwin

[1898-1937]

Robert Levin, *piano*

Selections from *Gershwin Songbook*

Gershwin

Wayne Marshall, *piano*

Piano Improvisation

Levin/ Marshall

Concerto for Two Pianos in E-flat Major, K. 365

Mozart

Allegro

Andante

Rondeau: Allegro

Robert Levin, *piano*

Wayne Marshall, *piano*

Steinway Piano courtesy of M. Steinert & Sons, certified Steinway dealership of New England.
The organ in this performance was made by Aeolian-Skinner after a design by G. Donald Harrison.

The program runs for approximately two hours.

*The audience is respectfully asked to turn off all electronic watches, paging devices,
and cellular phones during the performance.*

H&H Program Notes

EXTEMPOREANOUS ART

Improvisation in the Classical Era

ON May 11 1830 in the Great Concert Room of the King's Theatre, London, a concert by composer and virtuoso pianist Johann Nepomuk Hummel finished with an "Extemporaneous performance on the Pianoforte, on which occasion Mr. Hummel requests any of the company to give him a written theme to perform on."

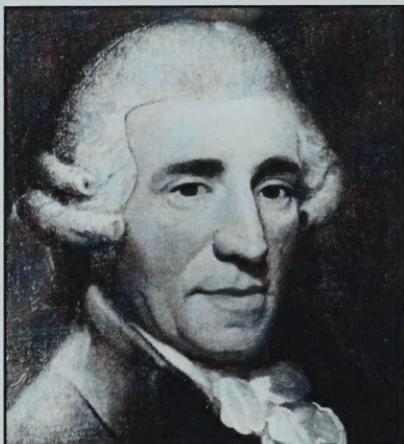
Extemporaneous performance, improvisation: that elusive, so highly-prized skill, fountain of musical invention, outward form of true, even natural, inspiration that the composed work, the enduring artifact, can only strive to recapture. Yet in the Western art tradition, the privileged status of the composed work, conceived in the furnace of inspiration, but honed, worked, and reworked on the anvil of craft, has often banished improvisation to the sidelines of musical life and music history. The improvisatory instinct that time and again through the history of Western music generated stylistic developments in composition, has, from the mid-nineteenth century, suffered in the face of a veneration of the printed text, the fixed embodiment of the work of art. Only in jazz has the essence of the improvisational art been revived, with improvised solos based on an existing tune or chord progression as the twentieth-century

analogue of performance styles from the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century.

In many cultures and traditions, among them those of the Middle East, northern India, and much of Asia and Africa, improvisation is central to musical performance. Even in the West, the addition of improvised elements to composed pieces was, until at least

the eighteenth century, integral to the art of performance. Indeed, improvisational facility has often been a touchstone of competence among performers. The occasion of Bach's visiting, as an old man, the court of Frederick the Great and improvising an elaborately complex fugue on a theme given to him then and there by the king himself, for example, is only the most famous of his improvisatory feats.

Such accomplishments were met with wonder and astonishment, especially when executed by a young prodigy like Mozart; but the greatest excitement was generated by the dizzying improvisatory displays of early nineteenth-century pianists, foremost among them virtuosos such Hummel, Ignaz Moscheles, and Franz Liszt. The twelve-year-old Liszt, presented with a theme from the audience, "though not very well acquainted with the air," as an eye-witness reported, "sat down and roved about the instrument,



Franz Joseph Haydn

occasionally touching a few bars of the melody, then taking it as a subject for a transient fugue; but the best part of the performance was that wherein he introduced the air with his right hand, while the left swept the keys chromatically; then he crossed over his right hand, played the subject with the left, while the right hand descended by semitones to the bottom of the instrument! It is needless to add that his efforts were crowned with the most brilliant success."

Soon after, he unleashed, with his improvisations, "the sublime inspirations of his genius: at one moment could be heard the noise of the storm, above which a graceful melody arose; at another, exquisitely tasteful and skilful modulations in the harmony; and sometimes several themes, despite each being in a different time and of a contrasting character, were made to come together as one, as well as a crowd of innovations."

Though on occasion pure soloistic display, improvisation could also furnish a conversational language between virtuosos. Moscheles describes how he and Mendelssohn "often extemporize together, each trying to pick up the other's harmonies at lightning speed, and to develop them further. Every time I start with a theme from one of his compositions, he derives tremendous pleasure by cutting in as quickly as possible with one of my own, usually ending in bursts of laughter on both sides. It often turns out to be like a musical version of blind man's buff where the players, as they grope about uncertainly, sometimes bang their heads together."

But if Moscheles engaged in "a sort of conquest of each other's minds" with Mendelssohn, the potential of improvisation for the jousting of musical giants was irresistible to the romantic imagination. Much more was at stake, for example, when

Beethoven's position as supreme Viennese pianist was challenged by Joseph Wölfl, an occasion reported in the language of the sports commentary: "...the extremely interesting combat of the two athletes often afforded the numerous and highly select company an indescribable artistic pleasure. Each presented the most recent products of his spirit. First one then the other gave free rein to the instantaneous inspirations of his glowing fantasy. Then they sat at two pianos and

improvised alternately on themes that they gave to each other. In technical prowess, it would have been difficult, even impossible, to award the palm of victory to either contestant." This was a contest between two aesthetically opposed worlds, the "mystery" of

Beethoven, appreciated only by the cognoscenti, pitted against Wölfl's accessible "progression of well-ordered ideas." And neither, the judgment of history notwithstanding, could be declared winner.

Not all composers were subject to the pressures that often demanded virtuoso display. Haydn's near thirty-year period of employment, beginning in his late twenties, at the court of the noble Hungarian family, the Esterházy's, to a great extent insulated him from the commercial realities of life in Europe's cultural capitals. Yet it afforded him incomparable opportunities for composition in almost all current genres. With first-rate performing forces at his disposal, including instrumentalists and singers among Europe's finest, along with a captive audience, Haydn could give free reign to his invention. By the late 1760s, the time of composition of symphony no. 59 (the nickname "Fire" refers to a contemporary play for which some version of the symphony may have served as incidental music), he was writing operas, concertos, sacred music, and instrumental music of all kinds, all with an originality not

*Even in the West, the
addition of improvised
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was, until at least the
eighteenth century, integral
to the art of performance.*

to be easily found in the metropolis.

Where Haydn chose security, Mozart willfully cast off the patron's protective mantle in search of the frisson of life on the open market. It is quite likely that he and his sister, Nannerl, traveling Europe as children and displaying their virtuoso gifts both individually and together, would have improvised as a duo. Nannerl, though, must have watched with more than a little regret as her brother left her behind in the progress of his career, continuing his European

tours without her, and finally leaving their native Salzburg for the glitter of Vienna. In Salzburg, Mozart had composed the E flat major concerto for two pianos for the two of them; perhaps as a coded message to Nannerl, he even quoted the opening solo of the concerto's last movement in the operatic church sonata in C that he himself played for



George Gershwin

mass shortly before his departure for Vienna. How much nostalgia must she have felt when, once in Vienna, he played "their" concerto with another pianist, his pupil and admirer, Josepha Auernhammer. Nannerl, monitoring Vienna activity from home base, must have wrung her hands at the thought of her brother's engaging, with his new partner, in the highly-charged improvisatory dueling of the cadenzas that had once belonged to their innocent world of sibling rivalry.

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British violinist and musicologist Brian Brooks is the newly appointed Christopher Hogwood Research Fellow at the Handel & Haydn Society. You can hear his recent recording of the Bach Sonatas and Partitas for solo violin on the Arts label, and you will soon be able to read his Cornell University doctoral dissertation on the early history of the violin as a solo instrument in Germany.

GERSHWIN AT THE BOUNDARY

If the boundary between elite and popular, exclusive and inclusive, is often blurred, in music as in all the arts, few musicians carved their niche on that boundary more successfully, or more profitably, than George Gershwin. Yet the appropriation by Gershwin of the African-American jazz idiom for white performers and a white audience makes his relationship to jazz problematic. From his earliest employment aged fifteen, promoting popular songs by playing them for potential performers, and through his years as an increasingly successful Broadway songwriter, Gershwin pursued a parallel interest in the techniques and forms of "classical" composition. Even after the stunning success of *Rhapsody in Blue* in Paul Whiteman's ambitious 1924 New York concert, "An experiment in modern music," that had as its ultimate aim hardly less than the supplanting of modernist "serious" music by American popular music, Gershwin continued his classical training. Though his Broadway successes piled up in the wake of *Rhapsody in Blue*, his attention increasingly turned to composition for a forum traditionally reserved for a more exclusive music. The resulting series of works, including the Preludes for Piano, and culminating in the opera *Porgy and Bess*, integrated, within more or less classical forms, elements from an eclectic range of popular styles, jazz among them. Many classical composers from the, including Ravel, Stravinsky, and Milhaud, borrowed elements from the musical language of jazz; few popular composers infiltrated the classical world with Gershwin's confidence and panache.

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H&H Artist Profiles

Grant Llewellyn, Conductor



2001–2002 marks Grant Llewellyn's inaugural season as Music Director of the Handel & Haydn Society. One of a new generation of exciting young conductors, Grant Llewellyn won a prestigious Conducting Fellowship at the Tanglewood Music Center in 1985, where he worked with Leonard Bernstein, Seiji Ozawa, Kurt Masur, and Andre Previn. Mr. Llewellyn has served as Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Associate Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Principal Guest Conductor of the Stavanger Symphony, and Principal Conductor of the Royal Flanders Philharmonic. He has appeared as guest conductor with orchestras throughout the world, including

the Québec Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony, the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, SWR Radio-Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart, the Trondheim Symphony Orchestra, and such major British orchestras as the Hallé, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. Also in demand as a conductor of opera, his recent projects have included his debut with the English National Opera conducting *The Magic Flute* in 2000, *Dido and Aeneas* at Spoleto USA, and performances of Handel's *Radamisto* with the Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Over the next two seasons, Grant Llewellyn will debut with no fewer than eight U.S. orchestras, including the Houston Symphony Orchestra, Brooklyn Philharmonic, and St. Paul Chamber Orchestra. Regular appearances with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales bring Mr. Llewellyn back home to his family in Dinas Powys, near Cardiff, Wales. Grant Llewellyn first conducted H&H in April, 1999 in a program featuring English and Italian madrigals.

Robert Levin, piano

Pianist Robert Levin has been heard throughout the United States, Europe, Australia, and in Asia. He has been piano soloist with conductors including Bernard Haitink, Seiji Ozawa, and Sir Simon Rattle. On fortepiano, he has appeared with Christopher Hogwood, Nicholas McGegan, Sir Roger Norrington, and Sir John Eliot Gardiner. Robert Levin is renowned for his restoration of the Classical period practice of improvised embellishments and cadenzas; his Mozart and Beethoven performances have been hailed for their active mastery of the Classical musical language. In addition to his performing activities, Robert Levin is a recognized theorist and Mozart scholar, and is the author of a number of articles and essays on Mozart. His completions of Mozart fragments have been published by Bärenreiter, Breitkopf & Härtel, Hänsler, and Peters, and have been recorded and performed throughout the world. He is currently preparing a new edition of the Mozart Piano Concertos with Cliff Eisen, to be published by Breitkopf & Härtel. Mr. Levin has recorded extensively for such labels as DG Archiv, CRI, Deutsche Grammophon, Nonesuch, Philips, and Sony Classical. He is presently Dwight P. Robinson, Jr. Professor of the Humanities at Harvard University.



Wayne Marshall, piano/ organ



Pianist and organist, Wayne Marshall draws on an exceptionally large and varied repertoire, particularly favoring the French Romantics. Mr. Marshall's recitals have included the Royal Festival Hall, St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral, and many leading American, European and Asian concert series and festivals. Other musical activities include improvisation, conducting, jazz and composition, as well as regular work teaching and conducting young musicians. As solo pianist, his repertoire ranges from the complete works of Gershwin for piano and orchestra to works by, among others, Ravel, Bernstein, Stravinsky and Franck. He was featured in the 1997 Last Night of

the Proms as both organ and piano soloist and also appeared as pianist and conductor in the 1998 Victoires de la Musique awards with the Orchestre de Paris. In May 1998, Marshall received the BBC Music Magazine's "Artist of the Year" award. As conductor/soloist, he has appeared widely, including Trondheim, Dallas, Toronto Symphony, Kalamazoo, San Antonio and Winnipeg Symphony Orchestras, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Bournemouth, Ulster Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Orchestre National de Belgique, Orchestre National de Lyon, Munich Radio and NDR Hannover. He has recordings with EMI Classics, Virgin Classics and Philips Classics. In October 1998, he received an ECHO (Deutscher Schallplattenpreis 1998) award for his "Gershwin Songbook" CD.

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Upcoming Concerts

2001 - 2002 Season

Mozart's Final Symphonies

Fri., Feb. 8 at 8pm - *Symphony Hall*
 Sat., Feb. 9 at 3pm - *Symphony Hall*
 Sun., Feb. 10 at 3pm - *Symphony Hall*
Grant Llewellyn, conductor
 Symphonies No. 35, 40, and 41

H&H explores the genius of Mozart's symphonies with the sparkling No. 35 (Haffner) and the two last and greatest, No. 40 and No. 41 (Jupiter).

Ancient and Modern

Fri., Feb. 22 at 8pm- NEC's *Jordan Hall*
 Sun., Feb. 24 at 3pm- *Old South Church*
Grant Llewellyn, conductor
 BACH: Motet "Komm, Jesu, komm!"
 BIRTWISTLE: "Bach Measures" (1996)
 STUCKY: "Partita-Pastorale, After J.S.B."
 BACH: Motet "Jesu Meine Freude"

Two glorious Bach motets, plus works inspired by J.S. Bach's music.

Tavener: Lamentations and Praises

Fri., Mar. 22 at 8pm- *Sanders Theatre*
 Sun., Mar. 24 at 3pm- *Sanders Theatre*
Joseph Jennings, conductor
 A co-commission by H&H, the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art Concert Series, and Chanticleer. Boston performances co-presented with FleetBoston Celebrity Series.

Members of the H&H Orchestra, together with Chanticleer, the celebrated vocal ensemble based in San Francisco, give the Boston premiere of Sir John Tavener's Lamentations and Praises, based on an Orthodox service for Holy Friday.

Baroque Concertos

Fri., Apr. 5 at 8pm- NEC's *Jordan Hall*
 Sun., Apr. 7 at 3pm- *Sanders Theatre*
Grant Llewellyn, conductor
Program to include works by Vivaldi, Handel, and Corelli.

Principal players from the H&H Orchestra display their uncommon virtuosity in a program featuring an array of works from the Italian Baroque.

Handel: Ariodante

Fri., Apr. 19 at 7:30pm- *Symphony Hall*
 Sun., Apr. 21 at 3pm- *Symphony Hall*
Christopher Hogwood, conductor
Cast to Include:
 Beth Clayton, *Ariodante*
 Curtis Streetman, *King of Scotland*
 Amy Burton, *Ginevra*
 John McVeigh, *Lurcanio*

A story of tumultuous passion, treachery, and the ultimate triumph of love. Christopher Hogwood returns in his new role as Conductor Laureate to conduct this semi-staged opera—sung in Italian with English supertitles.

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March 24, 1815:	The Handel & Haydn Society is founded "to promote the love of good music and a better performance of it."
December 25, 1815:	H&H gives its first public performance at King's Chapel in Boston.
July 15, 1817:	The Society Chorus is invited to perform for President James Monroe. (President Monroe's March is commissioned for the occasion.)
December 25, 1818:	First complete American performance of Handel's <i>Messiah</i> .
February 16, 1819:	First complete American performance of Haydn's <i>The Creation</i> .
1823:	Beethoven is commissioned to compose a work for the Society but dies before taking on the commission.
January 1, 1863:	The Society Chorus performs for the Emancipation Proclamation celebration (Julia Ward Howe, Composer of "Battle Hymn of the Republic," is a member of the chorus) – Ralph Waldo Emerson, orator.
June 1, 1865:	The Society performs at memorial services for President Lincoln.
May 5, 1878:	American premiere of Verdi's <i>Requiem</i> .
April 11, 1879:	First complete American performance of J.S. Bach's <i>St. Matthew's Passion</i> .
May 27, 1883:	The Society gives a benefit concert to aid Russian Jews fleeing czarist oppression.
1967:	Thomas Dunn is appointed Music Director of H&H, shifting the focus from solely choral music to a program of early and contemporary choral and instrumental music involving both performing and visual arts.
1985:	The H&H Education Program is established to serve young people with limited access to musical performances.
June 30, 1986:	Christopher Hogwood is appointed Artistic Director, introducing Historically Informed Performances with instruments appropriate to the time period of the piece.
January, 1988:	Jazz pianist Keith Jarrett performs with the H&H Orchestra, beginning a tradition of showcasing Classical and Jazz music in the same performance.
July 1, 2001:	Grant Llewellyn assumes the role of H&H Music Director as Christopher Hogwood becomes Conductor Laureate.

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Grant Llewellyn, Music Director • Christopher Hogwood, Conductor Laureate



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The Handel & Haydn Society's five-year \$4.0 million Vision Campaign provides resources to enhance the quality of all performances and to reach new audiences. The Society is also in the midst of a \$2.5 million Capital Campaign for permanent endowment and working capital reserve funds. We are grateful to the following donors whose generous commitments will guide H&H into the 21st century.

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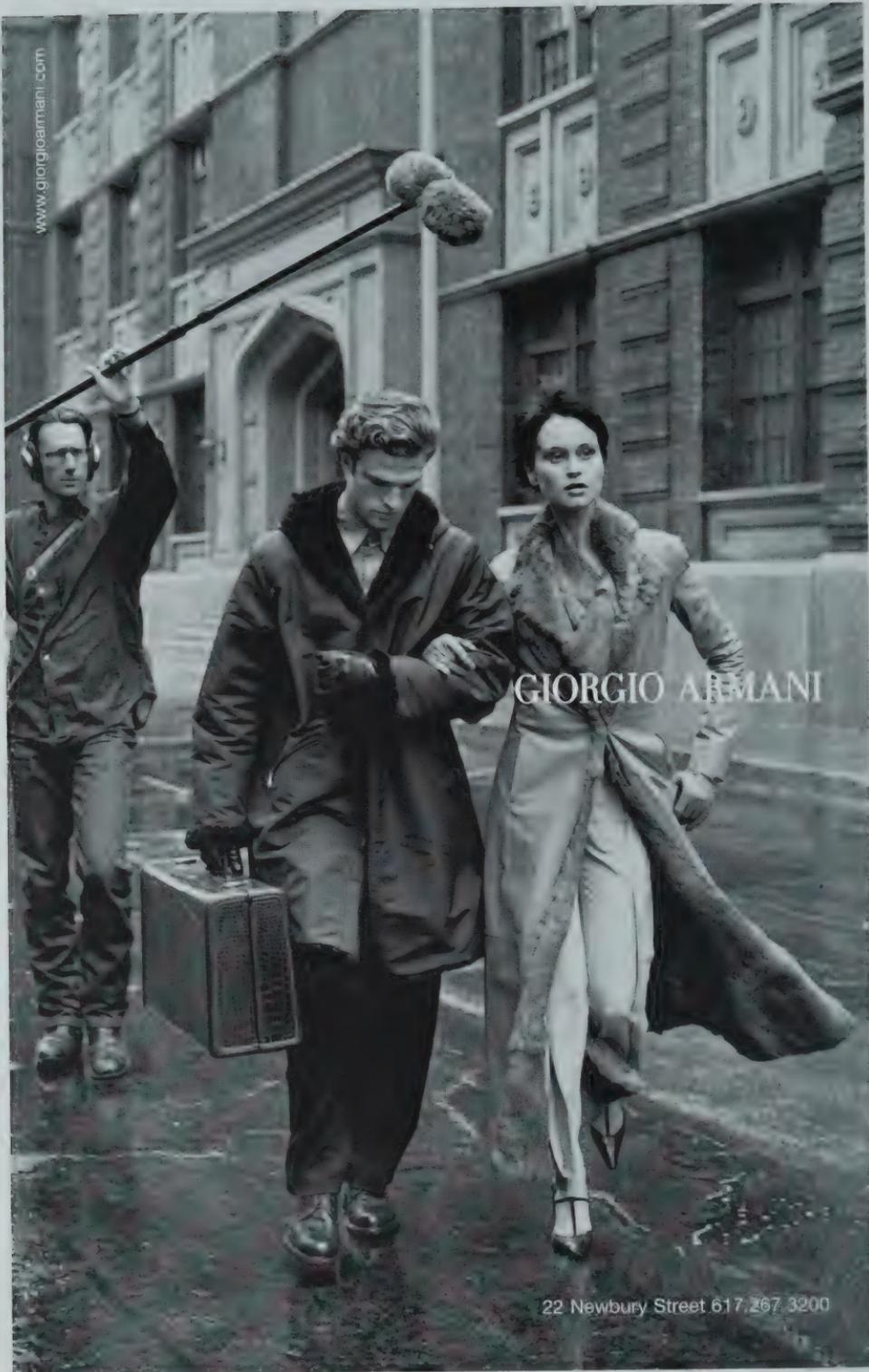
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